



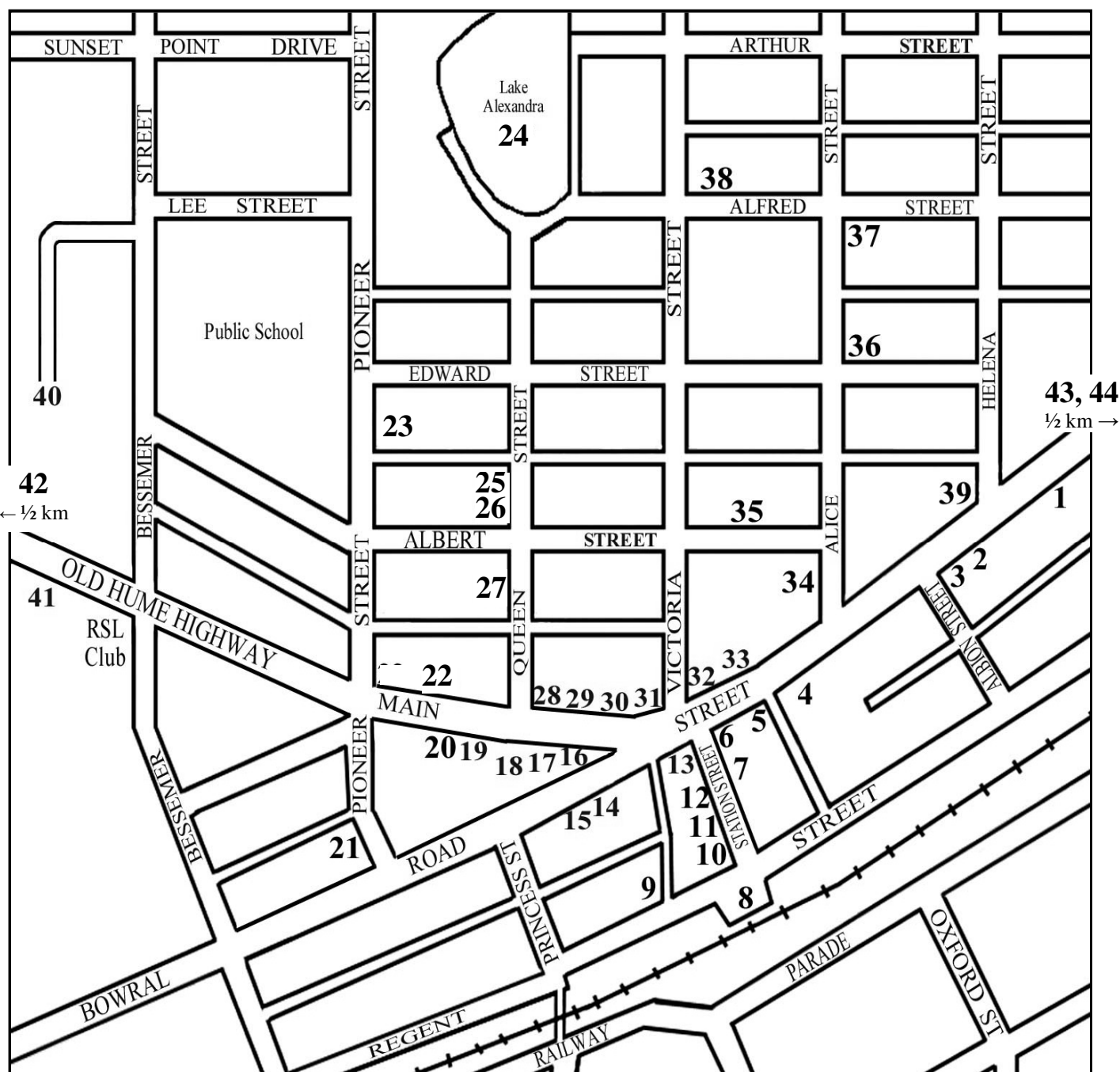
# A guide to historic sites of MITTAGONG



Southern Highlands - New South Wales

The name Mittagong is an Aboriginal word said to mean 'high mountain' and in 1816 Surveyor Meehan applied it to the range that the South (Argyle) Road had to cross – and is still known as Mittagong Range. When a new line of road to the south was being built through to Berrima in the 1830s, a rich deposit of iron ore was struck in the vicinity near where the Mittagong RSL Club stands

today. In 1848 a syndicate led by John Thomas Neale formed the FitzRoy Iron-mining Company to mine this iron ore and established a smelting operation nearby. Village settlements developed over following decades that were known as Gainsborough (1841), Fitzroy (1862), New Sheffield (1865) and finally Mittagong in 1884.



# A guide to historic sites of MITTAGONG



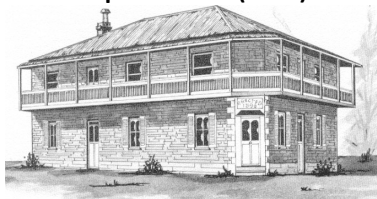
**This guide includes a walking section that starts and ends at the Visitor Information Centre; and some sites further away best visited by vehicle.**

**1. Visitors Information Centre** was first located in a leaf-shaped building opened in Winifred West Park in 1969. The Visitor Information Centre relocated to its present site in 1996, occupied before-hand by a Golden Fleece service station.

## **2. Old timber cottage (1880s)**

One of the few remaining examples of a basic timber cottage built in the 1880s to house workers and their family. It is still in use as a private home.

## **3. Wine shop and hotel (1890)**

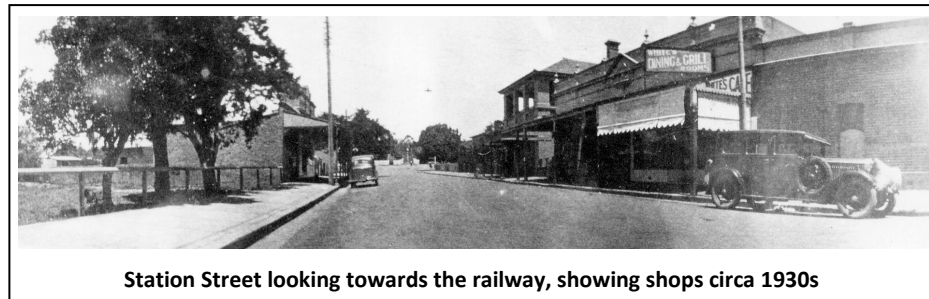
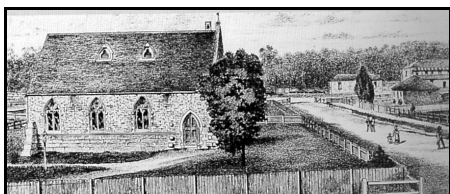


Built by George Austin as a wine shop and hotel in 1890 and it remained a wine shop until the 1930s. Now it operates as an elegant restaurant and café.

**4. Winifred West Park (1954)** Established following a State Govt. grant for a rest and recreation area on the Highway. Named after Miss Winifred West, founder of *Frensham* School. Originally the site of a blacksmith shop, Canterbury Hall and the first centre for tourist information in this area.

**5. Commemorative drinking trough** dedicated in 1993 to the people of Mittagong commemorating the freeway bypassing Mittagong which took place on 17 August 1992 and town improvement works opened 9 October 1993 by Hon John Fahey MP, Premier and Councillor DJ Wood, Mayor Wingecarribee Council.

## **6. St. Stephen's Church of England (1876)**



Station Street looking towards the railway, showing shops circa 1930s

The foundation stone for St Stephen's was laid in 1876 on land donated by the Fitzroy Iron Works. Opened in 1878, it is one of the three churches in the district designed by famed colonial architect Edmund Blacket. Major extensions were done in 1928 and further renovations and extensions completed in 2007.

**7. Station Street precinct.** As the photo above shows, Station Street was once the main precinct leading to the railway station. New buildings along the left side of the street have replaced earlier shops.

## **8. Railway Station (1867)**

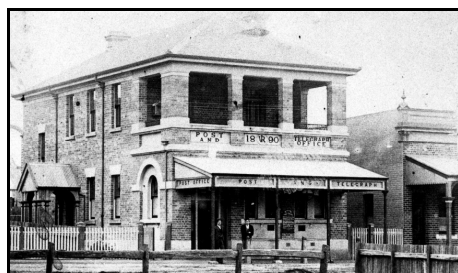


The Station opened in 1867. Refreshment rooms began operation in August 1870, and were later removed to Moss Vale.

**9. Cordial Factory (1880s)** Originally established by John Mealing who became town mayor. Building bought in 1900 by Mittagong Municipal Council and used as Council Chambers. Later became the RSL Club until its relocation to Bessemer St in 1978. Now home to the Highlands Christian Church.

**10. Police Station and Court House (c1880)** The original building was built about 1880. The courthouse section added in 1886 was of Gibbergunyah Quarry stone.

## **11. Mittagong Post Office (1890)**



Built on land purchased from the Commercial Banking Company, the Post Office opened in May 1891. Andrew Prott was the Postmaster, and it was in use until 1964 when the Post Office in the main street opened.

**12. Early Shop Premises** Built as a refreshment and small goods store, this building was once occupied by White's Café, and has seen many uses since including Station Street Realty.

**13. Nichols Bros Store** Originally run by the Dawson Brothers, it became well-known as Nichols Bros Store from 1914. It is now Whytes clothing shop.

**14. Double-fronted shop** Between the fire station and Whytes, it was at one time a refreshment room and snack bar. More recently it housed Eve's Ladies Fashion and is now an antique shop.

**15. Mittagong Fire Station (1918)** The town's fire station was built in 1918. Prior to that the site was used by Alderman Westbury as a Livery Stable.

**16. Memorial Clock (1920)** Built to honour the fallen of World War I. The foundation stone was laid in September 1919, by Ald Harvey, who dedicated it on 18 December 1920.

**17. The School of Arts (1899)** was built on land donated by Mr A W Tooth. From the 1950s, with a bow-shaped extension, it housed Mittagong Municipal Council. The outline of the School of Arts is still visible, being the centre building between the Playhouse and the old council chambers, now occupied by the Berrima District Historical Society.

**18. Memorial Hall (1911)** The grand opening of the Hall was held on 13 September 1911. It was renovated in 1955, and now accommodates the Mittagong Playhouse.

**19. Regal Theatre (1928)** Built by Harry Stevenson and opened by Sir George Fuller in 1928, the Regal Picture Theatre had a seating capacity of 800, and served also as skating rink. The original building has been recently remodelled as the Regal Professional Centre.

**20. Garage and Hire Car Centre (1920s)** This site where Harry & Bill Stevenson ran a garage and hire car service in the very early 1920s extended to the footpath where petrol bowlers were available for cars. Was also used as a welding shop



Buildings lining the Great Southern Road c1900, School of Arts left, Mittagong Hotel right

during the late 40s, and more recently became an antiques establishment.

**21. Cottages in Pioneer St.** These three cottages were built in the late 1880s. Originally owned by the Bunter family, one served as a shop (front still evident) and the other two were residences.

#### **22. The Boston Ivy (1880)**

This two storey building was built in 1880 by John Ruane, manager of the Fresh Food & Ice Co, and served as a temporary hotel after the Nattai Hotel burnt down. Now occupied by Timeless Threads, a craft and quilting supplier.

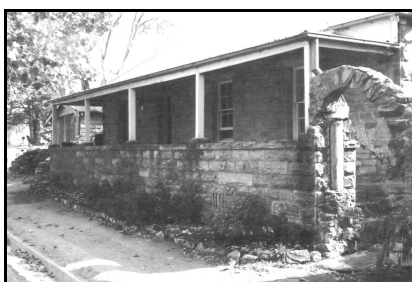
**23. Houses dating from the 1860s** may be viewed along Pioneer St between Albert and Edward Sts and around the block at Edward Lane. There's a period gas street lamp on one corner.

**24. Lake Alexandra (1875)** Formed when an embankment was built in 1875 across the gully to carry coal brought over Mount Alexandra to the Fitzroy Iron Works. The lake served as water supply for the Iron Works and for recreation.

#### **25. Residence - No. 10 Queen St.**

This stone cottage belonged to George Dawson of Dawson Bros store. Is notable for its cast iron lace work, and for the flagstones on the footpath. His brother Albert married Martha Lee, sister of Joseph Lee who built cottage next door.

#### **26. Leslie Cottage (1879) No. 8 Queen St**



The home of Joseph Lee a stonemason who worked on St. Stephens Church. Later his son, Shire Clerk Claude Lee, lived there until his death at 86 years.

**27. Mittagong Public Library (1877)** The Board of Education moved the public school from premises at the rear of the Methodist Church to this stone building in 1877. After the existing Public School in Pioneer Street was built in 1937, the building was converted to the Childrens Library in 1941.

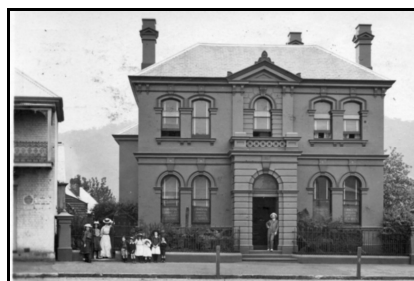
#### **28. The Mittagong Hotel (1890)**



Built in 1890 by Tommy Morris of the Coach & Horses Inn, who named it the 'Exchange Hotel'. Unfortunately during the 1890s depression Morris lost it to the bank. Known now as the 'Top Pub'.

**29. Bunter's Boot factory (c1890s)** An original timber store on the site, referred to as *Noah's Ark*, burnt down in 1887. John Bunter conducted a boot and shoe making business in the present building, once adorned with a iron lace verandah.

#### **30. Commercial Bank (1891)**



This elegant structure was built by the Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney (became National Australia Bank in the 1980s). Ceased as a bank chamber and became an eating establishment, the *Old Bank Café*, and is now being restored to become a boutique hotel.

#### **31. The Hilder's Family Hotel (1866)**

Built by John Hilder, proprietor of the Locomotive Inn, which previously stood at the rear of the same block. Served as a newsagency from 1930, an antique shop from the 1990s and is now a saddlery.

#### **32. Draper's Hotel (1875)**



Built by Frederick Draper in 1875 and called the *Commercial Hotel* it had a third timber storey added with mansard style roof and outer balconies. This was demolished and replaced in the 1930s.

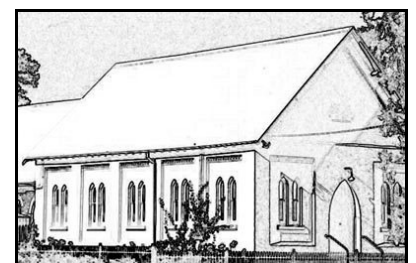
#### **33. John Mealing's Building (1890)**



Built in 1890 replacing three old bark roofed shops. Mealing was first Mayor of Mittagong. His initials adorn the centre parapet at the top of the building. Once adorned with a lace verandah, the top floor was a residence and shops lining the street front included the ES&A Bank.

**34. The Old Stables.** The stables was once part of the land belonging to a medical centre and printing office that once stood on the main road corner. The Stables building has had a variety of occupants and is now a hairdressers.

#### **35. Methodist Church (1865)**



The foundation stone was laid by the chairman of the Fitzroy Iron Company. The roof trusses are one of the few remaining Iron Works artefacts. In 1977 it became the Uniting Church.

#### **36. St Paul's Presbyterian Church (1885)**

This stone church with bell tower was erected in 1885, primarily for the Scottish families who worked at Joadja Creek. In 1958 a new Sunday School hall opened.

### 37. St Joseph's Convent (1927)

Opened as a Boarding School in 1927. In 1972 the convent ceased taking boarders and closed. It became Sunshine Lodge, a refuge for the intellectually handicapped that closed in 2012.

### 38. St Michael's Catholic Church

**(1888)** The foundation stone was laid in 1888, and the church opened the following year. Built of brick with an iron roof containing gabled openings and dormer vents, the roof was later replaced with tiles.

**39. Victoria House (1860)** Built by Henry E. Vaughan, Estate Agent of Sydney, on land sold by Ebenezer Vickery, of the Fitzroy Iron Works. Victoria House was used as a boy's boarding school for a short time, then as a doctor's surgery. Currently a Needlecraft centre well known for its fine supplies.

**Further sites that may be visited by vehicle are listed here.**

### 40. Fitzroy Iron Works (1848)

A chance find of a rich iron ore deposit led to the establishment of a smelting operation named after Sir Charles Fitzroy. Smelting commenced in 1848 and was a success for a time. The piers for Gundagai bridge were forged in 1864 and are still standing.

A cairn and tablet at **Mittagong Ironmines Oval** commemorate the birthplace of the Australian Iron Ore Industry. Some restored remnants of the early works are on display in the carpark under **Highlands Marketplace**.

**41. Mineral Springs** Named by Sir Charles Fitzroy as *Lady Mary Fitz Roy*, after his wife. Reputed for its tonic and invigorating properties. A pipe emerges with a clear stream of Chalybeate water through a cairn of ironstone and cement that can be seen next to the RSL. Near the spring are lampposts made from iron ore produced at the nearby smelter.

### 42. Prince of Wales Hotel (1865)

Originally a hotel, this building has been altered over the years and served a variety of purposes, and is now Minikin Lodge.

*For the next two sites, proceed back to Information Centre and continue along main road to Caravan Park; turn right opposite, proceed over railway bridge and turn right again.*

**43. The Maltings (1899)** Built for the Malting Co. of NSW by Stuart Bros of Sydney at a cost of £8,496. Tooth and Co. purchased the business in 1905. Now derelict and awaiting a buyer.

Nearby is **Fitzroy Inn (1830s)** Built by Alexander Brand for Anne Cutter. Was known as the Kangaroo Inn until 1850 when it became the Fitzroy Inn. Prisoners were held there overnight en route to Berrima Gaol. Later named Oaklands, a school for boys, set up by Henry Southey. Now has been faithfully restored to its original condition.

**44. Prince Albert Inn** This restored Old Colonial Georgian style inn opened in 1845 and has served a variety of purposes since, most connected to hospitality.



Looking north-east across the garden out front of the School of Arts, at the corner where Bowral Rd and the Hume Highway merge, circa 1900s (now Clock tower)

## Berrima District Historical & Family History Society

### BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM

Market Place, Berrima - near the bridge

Open Weekends, Public Holidays & NSW School Holidays 10am-4pm.

Closed Good Friday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day

Groups also at other times by appointment.

Telephone: Museum 02 4877 1130 After hours 02 4889 4405

Website: [www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au)

E-mail: [berrimamuseum@bigpond.com](mailto:berrimamuseum@bigpond.com)

**Exhibitions provide a fascinating insight into the social history of the Wingecarribee Shire, once known as the Berrima District and now as the Southern Highlands.**

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES & RESEARCH CENTRE

cnr. Bowral Road and Old Hume Highway, Mittagong

Open Mon and Tues 10 am - 4 pm; Sat 10 am - 1 pm; Phone: 4872 2169

Web: [www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au) E-mail: [bdhsarchives@gmail.com](mailto:bdhsarchives@gmail.com)

Society's postal address: PO Box 131 MITTAGONG NSW 2575

